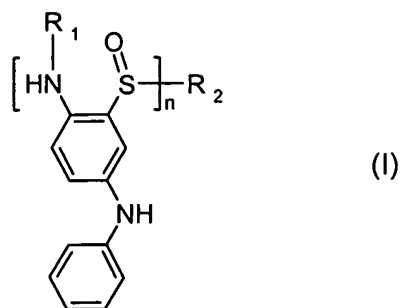


In the Claims

1. (currently amended) A compound of the formula I



wherein

R_1 is C_1 - C_{18} alkyl, C_5 - C_{12} -cycloalkyl, phenyl, benzyl, or allyl;

n is 1 or 2;

if n is 1, R_2 is C_4 - C_{18} alkyl, C_5 - C_{12} -cycloalkyl, aryl or heteroaryl, benzyl, allyl, $(CH_2)_mCOOR_3$, or is $(CH_2)_mCN$;

if n is 2, R_2 is $-(CH_2)_p-$ or $-(CH_2)_2-[O-(CH_2)_2]_m-$; ~~$S-(CH_2)_p-S$ or $S-(CH_2)_2-[O-(CH_2)_2]_m-S$~~

R_3 is C_1 - C_{18} alkyl, benzyl, allyl;

m is 1 or 2; and

p is a number from 2 to 12.

2. (currently amended) Compound of formula I according to claim 1 wherein

R_1 is C_2 - C_8 -alkyl, cyclohexyl, phenyl, benzyl, or allyl,

if n is 1, R_2 is C_4 - C_{18} alkyl, cyclohexyl, benzyl, phenyl, $(CH_2)_2COOR_3$, or is $(CH_2)_2CN$;

if n is 2, R_2 is $-(CH_2)_p-$ or $-(CH_2)_2-[O-(CH_2)_2]_m-$; ~~$S-(CH_2)_p-S$ or $S-(CH_2)_2-[O-(CH_2)_2]_m-S$~~ ;

R_3 is C_1 - C_{18} alkyl; and

p is a number from 2 to 6.

3. (previously presented) A composition comprising

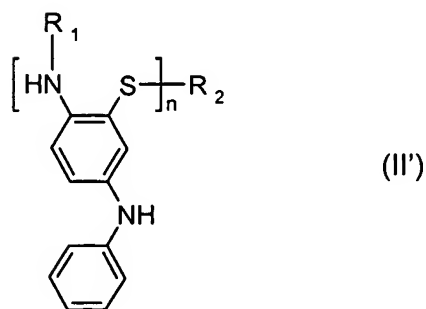
- a) a naturally occurring or synthetic elastomer susceptible to oxidative, thermal, dynamic, light-induced and/or ozone-induced degradation, and
- b) as stabilizer, at least one compound of the formula I according to claim 1.

4. (original) A composition according to claim 3, in which component a) is a natural or synthetic rubber or a vulcanizate prepared therefrom.

5. (original) A composition according to claim 4, in which component a) is a polydiene vulcanizate, a halogen-containing polydiene vulcanizate, a polydiene copolymer vulcanizate or an ethylene-propylene terpolymer vulcanizate.

6. (previously presented) A composition according to claim 3, further comprising one or more components selected from the group consisting of pigments, dyes, fillers, levelling assistants, dispersants, plasticizers, vulcanization activators, vulcanization accelerators, vulcanizers, charge control agents, adhesion promoters, antioxidants, flame retardants, UV absorbers and light stabilizers, phenolic antioxidants, aminic antioxidants, organic phosphites or phosphonites and thio-synergists.

7. (currently amended) A thioether of formula II'

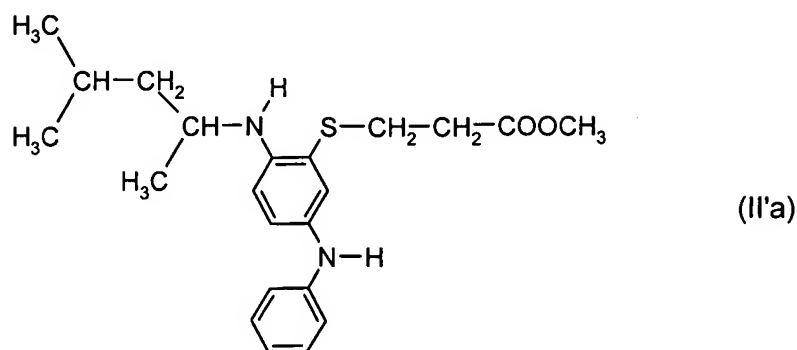


wherein n is 1 or 2,

R₁ is C₁-C₁₈alkyl, C₅-C₁₂-cycloalkyl, phenyl, benzyl, or allyl; and

R₂, if n is 1, is tert-nonyl or tert-dodecyl or (CH₂)₂COOR₃ or (CH₂)₂CN, where R₃ is C₁-C₁₈alkyl, ; or

R_2 , if n is 2, is $-(CH_2)_p-S-(CH_2)_p-S-$ with p ranging from 2 to 6; with the proviso that the compound of the formula II'a



is excluded.

8. (previously presented) A method of grafting a compound of formula I according to claim 1 onto an elastomer, which method comprises heating a mixture of elastomer and at least one compound of formula I above the softening point of the elastomer and allowing them to react with one another.

9. (canceled)

10. (original) A process for stabilizing an elastomer to prevent oxidative, thermal, dynamic, light-induced and/or ozone-induced degradation and preventing contact discoloration of substrates coming into contact with the elastomer, which process comprises incorporating into these or applying to these at least one compound of formula I according to claim 1.

11. (previously presented) A composition comprising according to claim 3 where the at least one compound of the formula I is present in an amount from 0.05 to 10%, based on the weight of component a).

12. (previously presented) A thioether of formula II' according to claim 7 where R_2 , if n is 1, is tert-nonyl or tert-dodecyl or $(CH_2)_2COOR_3$ or $(CH_2)_2CN$, where R_3 is i-octyl, i-tridecyl, n-dodecyl or stearyl.